

## Members of Tennessee and North Carolina Delegations Offer Resolution to Recognize 75th Anniversary of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

WASHINGTON — A group of U.S. senators and congressmen from Tennessee and North Carolina introduced resolutions today in both the House and Senate to recognize the 75th anniversary of the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The resolutions were introduced by Senators Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), Richard Burr (R-N.C.), Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), and Kay Hagan (D-N.C.); and by Congressmen Phil Roe (R-Tenn. 1) and Jimmy Duncan (R-Tenn. 2).

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the country, attracting over nine million visitors each year. The park today covers approximately 521,621 acres of land in both states, making it the largest protected area in the eastern United States.

"I grew up and live in the backyard of the Smokies, so I'm especially proud to honor its 75th anniversary," said Alexander, ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Interior Subcommittee which oversees funding for the park. "The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited park in our country, and we must all work together to keep it pristine for future generations of hikers, fishers, and outdoor enthusiasts."

"The Great Smoky Mountains National Park has been, and will forever be, an integral part of North Carolina's history and culture," said Burr. "For 75 years the park has been an outdoor classroom for all Americans, a place where all generations can come and discover the wonder of nature. Congratulations to all of the Park Rangers and Staff that help preserve this magnificent mountain range for us and generations to come. Happy 75th Anniversary to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park."

"I love being outdoors and feel very fortunate to have grown up in East Tennessee with the Smokies right in my backyard," said Corker. "My real introduction to

the park came when I was a student at UT, and later when I hiked parts of the Appalachian Trail. These mountains are truly a national treasure, and I look forward to joining my fellow Tennesseans as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.”

“In North Carolina, we’re lucky to have beautiful beaches in the east and rolling mountains in the west,” said Hagan. “The Great Smoky Mountains offer a great variety of recreational activities and majestic views, and serve as a reminder that we must do what we can to protect them for future generations. During this 75th anniversary year, I encourage all North Carolinians to visit the Great Smoky Mountains and see what they have to offer. As a hiker myself, I look forward to visiting western North Carolina and the Great Smoky Mountains later this year.”

“The Great Smoky Mountains National Park has remained the most popular national park in the country with more than 8 million annual visitors, which generates a boost for our local economy,” said Roe. “This National Park has not only been a wonderful place I’ve enjoyed hiking on for many years with my family and friends, but it also encompasses a unique ecosystem which began during the Ice Age when plants and animals were forced to migrate south. In an effort to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of The Great Smoky Mountains, I introduced a resolution to the U.S. House of Representatives that recognizes this great park that provides sanctuary for the most diverse flora and fauna of any national park in the temperate United States that stretches over North Carolina and East Tennessee.”

“The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is certainly a national treasure, and I am proud to have a portion of it in my District. As millions of people already know, the park offers something for every outdoor enthusiast, whether they are interested in a rigorous hike or taking a leisurely drive to enjoy the spectacular views,” said Duncan. “By marking the park’s anniversary, we remember those whose land made the park possible and strive to preserve its natural beauty for generations to come.”

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park was established by an act of Congress on June 15, 1934, following years of effort by communities in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina. Funding to create the park came from citizens of communities surrounding the park, the state legislatures and governors of both states, and a gift from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund.

Several events commemorating the anniversary of the park are scheduled this summer. For more information, please visit: <http://greatsmokies75th.org>.

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